

Appendix 7

NMAC Guidelines for the use of Tactical Aviation Resources.

Tactical aviation resources include Type 1, 2, 3, 4 airtankers, MAFFS, exclusive use helicopters (excluding USFS National Type 2 Helicopters), smokejumper aircraft, lead planes, ASMs, and Air Attack platforms.

Strategic Principles

- Initial action fire operations are the primary mission for tactical aviation resources.
- Assignment of these resources to non-initial action fires, regardless of complexity, will be on a case by case basis. The following criteria will be used:
 1. Imminent threat to human life including occupied structures.
 2. Imminent threat to communities, community infrastructure, historically significant cultural resources, commercial businesses, and principal residences.
 3. Threats to other structures and improvements such as seasonal homes, cabins and high value outbuildings.
 4. Threats to natural resources.
 5. Threats to low value structures.
- Requests for use of these aviation resources on non-initial action fires must include the above criteria to enable dispatch centers to correctly allocate scarce resources.
- Type 1 and 2 airtankers and MAFFS, will be pre-positioned based on NMAC strategic considerations and prioritization criteria as stated in the NMAC Preparedness Strategy, 2006. This prepositioning will be implemented by NICC.
- Use of retardant must be restricted to situations where ground forces are available and able to take advantage of the retardant drops.

Operational Procedures

- NICC will be delegated authority from NMAC to guide strategic deployment of airtankers, MAFFS, helicopters, lead planes and ASMs, and smokejumper aircraft.
- Type 1 and 2 airtankers, MAFFS, lead planes, ASMs, and smokejumper aircraft will be prepositioned by NICC in consultation with the Geographic Area MACs.
- On the morning GACC/NICC conference call, daily assignments will be validated and aircraft reallocated as necessary. In the event of disagreement on the resource allocation, NICC will make the final decision.
- GACC/NICC afternoon conference calls will determine aviation requirements and position strategy for the following day. NICC will be the final decision maker, if necessary.
- GACCs will establish priorities when competition for aviation resources exists. GACC to GACC initial action agreements will continue to be utilized per the National Interagency Mobilization Guide (Chapter 13.3).

- When requested to make a Type 1 or 2 airtanker, MAFFS, lead plane, ASM or smokejumper aircraft available to move to a location of greater risk, the local unit or GACC will do so without hesitation.

Approved Aircraft

- Federal Aircraft: Aircraft procured and approved by federal firefighting agencies are authorized for use on wildland fire operations managed by federal, state and local governments.
- Approved Cooperator Aircraft: Aircraft procured/owned by cooperating agencies (state and local) may be utilized on federally managed fires only when federal cooperative agreements are in place that approve those aircraft and pilots for the intended use and that authorize payment procedures.
- Federal Lands under State Protection: State and local governments may use non-federally approved aircraft on federal lands only when and where the state/local agency has formal protection responsibility on those lands and when the state/local agency maintains operational control of those aircraft.
- Federal Air Tanker Base: Non-federally approved aircraft are authorized for use and retardant loading at federal air tanker bases when operational control is maintained by the state/local agency.
- Federal Personnel: Federal employees may be assigned to fires when non-federally approved aircraft are under the operational control of state/local agencies. No federal employee may be assigned with contracting/procurement responsibility related to non-federally approved aircraft. No federal employee may be assigned to a position that exercises operational control of a non-federally approved aircraft.
- Federal Aerial Supervision: Federal personnel may provide aerial supervision, including “lead profiles”, to non-federally approved aircraft under existing standard procedures and agreements, only when operational control is maintained by the state or local agency.
- Emergency Circumstances: When lives and/or property are immediately threatened by wildland fire on federal lands under federal protection, a local line officer may, with state/local agency concurrence, take operational control of non-federally approved aircraft if sufficient federal aircraft are not available to protect the public, provided that the local federal line officer obtains prior approval from the appropriate Fire Director, or their designee. Whenever this type of use is approved and occurs, it shall be documented through the SAFECOM system.

The following individuals are designated as approving officials for the emergency circumstances described above, for their respective Geographic Area.

Primary ContactAlternate

NR	Rick Hafenfeld	406-329-4903	Allen Edmonds	406-896-2912
RM	Tom Landon	303-275-5740	J. Kent Hamilton	303-239-3809
SW	Mike Rotonda	505-842-3359	John Selkirk	505-438-7431
GB	Terry Cullen	801-622-9144	Bob Kuhn	801-625-5511
CA	Dennis Hulbert	916-640-1033	Paul Bannister	916-978-4437
NW	Jon Rollens	503-808-2359	Brad Bernardy	503-808-6593
AK	Ed Strong	907-356-5642	John Liston	907-586-8837
EA	Sandra LaFarr	414-297-3744	Wayne Bushnell	414-297-3682
SA	Joe Ferguson	404-347-2726	Dave Broadnax	404-347-3735

The intent of this direction is to keep non-federally approved air tankers under the operational control of the sponsor agency. If needed, further clarification on these issues can be obtained from agency regional/national aviation and fire operations offices.